IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In re patent application of:	) Date: December 8, 2008
Erik D.N. Monsen, et al	) Attorney Docket No.: F- 800
Serial No.: 10/814,328	) Customer No.: 00919
Filed: March 31, 2004	) Group Art Unit: 3628
Confirmation No.: 5334	) Examiner: Rutao Wu
Title: SPECIAL SERVICE MAIL ELECTRONIC UPLOADS WITH AUTOMATIC RETURN OF LEGAL ELECTRONIC PROOF OF INDUCTION / ACCEPTANCE	

<u>APPELLANT'S BRIEF ON APPEAL</u>

Sir:

This brief is in furtherance of the Notice of Appeal filed in this case on November 19, 2008.

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I.   Real Party in Interest

Pitney Bowes Inc. is the real party interest.

II.   Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related Appeals and Interferences.

III.   Status of Claims

(a) Claims 1 - 3 and 5 -21 are in the application.
(b) Claim 4 has been cancelled.
(c) Claims 1 – 3 and 5 -21 are rejected.
(d) Claims 1 – 3 and 5 -21 are on appeal.

IV.   Status of Amendments

An Amendment subsequent to the Final Rejection of August 20, 2008, was filed on October 14, 2008. This Amendment was not entered.

V.   Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The present invention is a method for reducing the use of gummed service stickers and the completion by hand of special forms and cards for specialty mail and certificates of mailing. The invention permits a mailer to obtain legal proof of induction/acceptance of mail pieces without requiring the mailer to bring the mail piece to the post office. This invention also reduces the number of trips that a mailer has to make to the post office, and the time that a mailer has to wait in line at the post office counter.

Claim 1 is the only independent claim in this Patent Application.

Appellants claimed invention claims a method for providing proof of mailing one or more mail pieces by a mailer. The method includes the following steps:

(a) placing an identification code (Fig. 1, 15 Paragraph 011, Page 4) on individual mail pieces (Fig. 1, 11 Paragraph 011, Page 4) with a postage meter (Fig. 1, 12 Paragraph 012, Page 4) at a location other than a post office, wherein the identification code identifies the recipient of the mail piece and uniquely identifies individual mail pieces;

(b) transmitting the identification code to a data center; (Paragraph 013, Page 4)

(c) depositing one or more mail pieces with the post office at the post office or at a location other than the post office; (Paragraph 015, Page 5)

(d) attempting reading by the post office at a location other than the post office or at the post office the identification code that is on one or more mail pieces; (Paragraph 015, Page 5)

(e) retrieving the identification code from the data center and the identification code read by the post office; (Paragraph 015, Page 5)

(f) notifying the postage meter that individual identification codes have been received by the data center and individual mail pieces identification codes have been read or not read by the post office; (Paragraphs 0124 - 025, Pages 9 and 10) and

(g) printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has been read by the post office to provide proof of mailing the mail piece having the identification code. (Paragraphs 024 - 025, Pages 9 and 10)

Appellant's invention is shown in paragraph 011 of page 3 to paragraph 021 of page 9, paragraph 024 of page 10 to paragraph 025 of pages 10 and 11 of Appellant's specification. Claim 1 is also illustrated in Figs. 1, 2 A, 2B, 5 A and 5B.
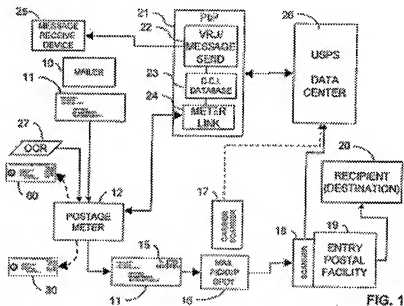
FIG. 1

[011] Fig. 1 shows a mailer 10 who is going to mail a mail piece 11. The mailer 10 uses a postage meter 12 to pay the postage for mailing mail piece 11. Meter 12 may be an electronic meter manufactured by Pitney Bowes Inc. of 1 Elmcroft Road, Stamford, CT, or a personal computer postage meter system with a secure data storage device manufactured by Pitney Bowes Inc. of 1 Elmcroft Road, Stamford, CT. An optical character recognition scanner 27 reads the recipient's address on mail piece 11, or the user of meter 12 enters the recipient's address into meter 12. Mail piece 11 contains a unique identification code 15, i.e., the meter serial number and the date and time that a postal indicia was affixed to mail piece 11, that is described in the description of Fig. 4.

[012] Meter 12 places adequate postage on mail piece 11. The mailer 10 submits the mail piece 11 to a USPS mail pick up spot 16. A hand-held scanner 17 may read unique identification code 15 at mail pick up spot 16, or a scanner 18 may read identification code 15 at entry USPS facility 19. Facility 19 will process mail piece 11 and deliver it to the recipient's destination 20.

[013] Meter 12 is coupled to a data processing center such as Pitney Bowes Postage By Phone data center 21. Data center 21 contains a message sending device 22, i.e., voice response unit, telephone, facsimile, e-mail, etc., a certificate of induction process/database 23, and a meter link 24. Meter 12 is coupled to messaging receiving device 25, i.e., telephone, facsimile, e-mail. Data center 21 is also coupled to USPS data center 26.

[014] A plurality of meters 12 may upload the unique identification code 15 that is placed on a specific mail piece 11 to meter link 24. Meter link 24 transfers the identification codes to certificate of induction process/ database 23. From time to time, process/database 23 is used to produce a batch file from identification codes 15 that it has received from a plurality of meters 12. The batch file is transmitted to USPS data center 26.

[015] After scanners 17 or 18 read identification code 15, identification code 15 is processed and transmitted to USPS data center 26. Data center 26 stores the identification codes 15 that it receives from scanners 17 and/or 18, and performs

a matching process with the identification codes 15 that it receives from certificate of induction process/database 23. A batch file of those matches is produced by data center 26 and is sent to process/database 23. Then, each matched identification code 15 produces a digitally signed message that indicates the USPS has noted the entry of the mail piece 11 that has identification code 15 affixed thereto. The digitally signed message is sent to meter 12 where it is stored in the meter's non-volatile memory awaiting mailer's 10 command to print a certificate of induction 30, which will be described in the description of Fig. 5A, on a paper tape. Meter 12 may also print on a paper tape (not shown) a certificate of non-induction 60 which will be described in the description of Fig. 5B. Process/data base 23 is coupled to messaging sending device 22 to provide and store a message announcing the arrival of a certificate of induction 30 being available at meter 12. The message may also be sent to the user of meter 12 via messaging device 25, i.e., e-mail, facsimile, telephone, etc.
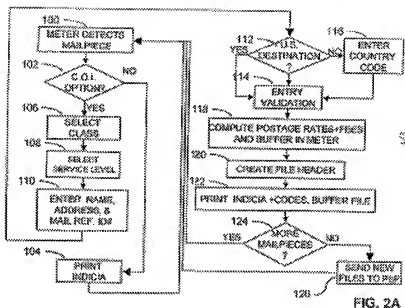
FIG. 2A

[016] Fig. 2A is a flow chart describing an information gathering procedure at a postage meter for obtaining proof of mailing, i.e., certificate of induction, from a postage meter that uses manual recipient address entry. The procedure begins in block 100 where meter 12 detects the presence of mail piece 11. Then the procedure goes to decision block 102. In block 102, the mailer is asked whether or not the mailer wants the certificate of induction option, i.e., proof of mailing. If the mailer decides that the certificate of induction option is not desired, the procedure goes to block 104 where a normal postal indicia indicating payment of postage is printed on mail piece 11. If the mailer decides that the certificate of induction option is desired, the procedure goes to block 106 where the mailer is asked to select the class of mail, i.e., first class, priority mail, express mail, etc. After the mailer selects the class of mail, the procedure goes to block 108 where the mailer selects the service level, i.e., certified mail, delivery confirmation, insured mail, registered mail, signature confirmation, etc. After the mailer enters

the service level, the procedure goes to block 110 where the mailer is asked to enter the recipient's name and address and the mailer's reference number, i.e., docket number. After the mailer enters the information in block 110, the procedure goes to decision block 112.

[017] Decision block 112 asks the mailer if mail piece 11 is going to be mailed to a United States destination address. If block 112 determines that mail piece 11 is not going to be mailed to a United States destination address, the procedure goes to block 116 where the mailer is asked to enter the country code for the destination address of mail piece 11. If block 112 determines that mail piece 11 is going to be mailed to a United States destination address or the mailer has entered the country code in block 116, the procedure goes to block 114. At block 114, postage meter 12 validates all of the above entries provided by the mailer.

[018] After all of the entries are validated, the procedure goes to block 118, where meter 12 computes the postage rates and service fees and stores them in a buffer of meter 12. Now the procedure goes to block 120 to create and store a header for the record regarding mail piece 11 in a buffer of meter 12. Then the procedure goes to block 122 and causes meter 12 to print a normal postal indicia and identification code 15 on mail piece 11. Now the procedure goes to decision block 124. Block 124 determines whether or not there are any more mail pieces. If block 124 determines there are additional mail pieces, the procedure goes back to the input of block 100. If block 124 determines there are no additional

mail pieces, the procedure goes to block 126. Block 126 sends the files to data center 21, and then the procedure goes back to block 100.
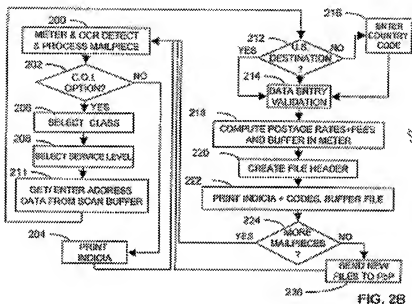

FIG. 2B

[019] Fig. 2B is a flow chart describing an information gathering procedure at the postage meter for obtaining proof of mailing. The procedure begins in block 200 where meter 12 and optical character recognition device 27 (Fig. 1) detect the presence of mail piece 11. Then the procedure goes to decision block 202. In block 202, the mailer is asked whether or not the mailer wants the certificate of induction option, i.e., proof of mailing. If the mailer decides that the certificate of induction option is not desired, the procedure goes to block 204 where a normal postal indicia indicating payment of postage is printed on mail piece 11. If the mailer decides that the certificate of induction option is desired, the procedure goes to block 206 where the mailer is asked to select the class of mail, i.e., first class, priority mail, etc. After the mailer selects the class of mail, the procedure goes to block 208 where the mailer selects the service level, i.e., certified mail,

delivery confirmation, insured mail, registered mail, signature confirmation, etc. After the mailer enters the service level, the procedure goes to block 211 where meter 12 obtains recipient's name and address and identification information by scanning the face of mail piece 11. Then the procedure goes to decision block 212.

[020] Decision block 212 asks the meter if mail piece 11 is going to be mailed to a United States destination address. If block 212 determines that mail piece 11 is not going to be mailed to a United States destination address, the procedure goes to block 216 where the device 27 provides the information to enter the country code for the destination address of mail piece 11. If block 212 determines that mail piece 11 is going to be mailed to a United States destination address or the device 27 has provided the information to enter the country code in block 216, the procedure goes to block 214. At block 214, postage meter 12 validates all of the above entries provided by the device 27 and meter 12.

[021] After all of the entries are validated, the procedure goes to block 218, where meter 12 computes the postage rates and service fees and stores them in a buffer of meter 12. Now the procedure goes to block 220 to create and store a header for the record regarding mail piece 11 in a buffer of meter 12. Then the procedure goes to block 222 and causes meter 12 to print a normal postal indicia and unique identification code 15 on mail piece 11. Now the procedure goes to decision block 224. Block 224 determines whether or not there are any more

mail pieces. If block 224 determines there are additional mail pieces, the procedure goes back to the input of block 200. If block 224 determines there are no additional mail pieces, the procedure goes to block 226. Block 226 sends the files to data center 21, and then the procedure goes back to block 200.
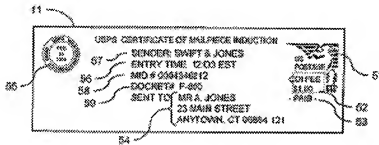
[024] Fig. 5A is a drawing of certificate of induction 30 indicating that a scanner of the post office has read unique identification code 15 on mail piece 11 indicating that mail piece 11 has entered the delivery process. Certificate of induction 30 contains eagle 51, the fee for the certificate of induction 52, an indication that it has been paid 53, the recipient's name and address 54, a seal 55 of the entering post office that indicates the date of receipt of mail piece 11, the time 56 a scanner controlled by the post office read unique identification code 15, the serial number 58 of meter 12 indicating that a secure message was received from meter 12, the sender's name 57, and the mailer's docket number 59, which will remind the mailer to place certificate of induction in the correct file. It would be obvious to one skilled in the art that the sender's address may also be included because the licensee's name and address of meter 12 is known to data center 21.
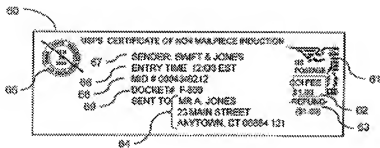
FIG. 5B

[025] Fig. 5B is a drawing of a certificate of non-induction 60 indicating that a scanner of the post office has not read unique identification code 15 on mail piece 11 indicating that mail piece 11 has not entered the delivery process. Certificate of non-induction 60 contains eagle 61, the fee for the certificate of induction 62, an indication 63 that the fee for the certificate of induction has been refunded to meter 12, the recipient's name and address 64, a seal 65 of the entering post office that indicates the date that meter 12 notified data center 21 that a certificate of induction is being requested for mail piece 11, an indication 66 that a scanner controlled by the post office has not read unique identification code 15 or that there is no USPS record of reading identification code 15, the serial number 68 of meter 12, the sender's name 67, and the mailer's docket number 69, i.e., F-800, which will remind the mailer that mail piece 11 was not received by the post office, to place certificate of non-induction in the correct file and to contact the recipient. Certificate of non-induction 60 will be prepared after a time interval determined by the post office data center 21 receives an indication that a certificate of induction was placed on mail piece 11 by meter 12. It would be obvious to one skilled in the art that the sender's name and address may also

be included because the name and address of the licensee of meter 12 is known to data center 21.

VI.   Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

      A.   Whether or not claims 1-3 and 5-20 are patentable under 35 USC § 103(a) over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0101147 to Montgomery et. al.

      B.   Whether or not claim 21 is patentable under 35 USC § 103(a) over Montgomery in view of Ng U.S. Patent 5,174,398.

VII.   Argument

A.   Claims 1-3 and 5-20 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC § 103 (a) over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0101147 to Montgomery et. al.

      The Examiner stated the following in pages 4 and 5 of the Final Rejection. Montgomery et al does disclose a tracking information database 456 for storing each tracking 10 that has been issued to an end user computer 308 and the postage information associated with each tracking 10... and periodically retrieving postage information from the tracking information database 456 for transmission to the master tracking computer system 310. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Montgomery et al to retrieve the identification code from the data center and the identification code read by the post office since the delivery status are updated after the mail pieces is read by the postal authority, and it would be necessary for the postal authority to retrieve the identification code in order to update the delivery status.

      Montgomery discloses the following in paragraph 0101.

      [0101] In addition to the previously described components, the centralized postage-issuing computer system 307 comprises a local memory 452, which in addition to the previously described databases, stores a tracking ID database 454 of pre-stored

unassigned tracking ID's received by the master tracking computer system 310, and a tracking. information database 456 for storing each tracking ID that has been issued to an end user computer 308 and the postage information associated with each tracking ID, i.e., the information contained in the tracking ID request. The centralized postage-issuing computer system 307 further comprises a set of postage dispensing modules 458, which in addition to the previously described modules, includes a tracking ID allocation module 460 in place of the tracking ID request module 438, and a database management module 462 in place of the database management module 436. The tracking ID allocation module 460 is configured for allocating unique tracking ID's from the tracking ID database 454 to the end user computers 308 in response to receiving tracking ID requests from the end user computers 308. In addition to performing the afore-described functions, the database management module 462 is further configured for storing pools of unassigned tracking ID's within the tracking ID database 454 as they are periodically received by the master tracking computer system 310, and for periodically retrieving postage information from the tracking information database 456 for transmission to the master tracking computer system 310.

Montgomery discloses a tracking information database 456 for storing each tracking ID that has been issued to an end user computer 308 and the postage information associated with each traciking ID, i.e., the information contained in the tracking ID request.

Montgomery discloses the following in paragraph 0184.

"[0184] At step 1204, the postage transaction information, along with the tracking ID's and associated delivery status, is recorded. Specifically, the database management module 1136 stores the postage transaction information in the postage database 1130. At step 1206, the multitude of mail pieces are processed through the postal authority, which in this case, is the USPS. At step 1208, the postal authority, upon delivery of the mail pieces to their intended destination, reads the tracking ID's on the mail pieces. At step 1210, this delivery information is transmitted to and recorded in the master tracking computer system 390. Specifically, the database management module 1178 updates the confirmatory delivery status information in the tracking information database 1172 by changing the status from "accepted" to "delivered.""

Montgomery discloses the use of tracking ID's to facilitate the refunding of unused postage. The delivery status for duplicate postage transactions can then

be reviewed to determine whether the mail pieces associated with these postage transactions have been delivered.

The Examiner stated the following in page 5 of the Final Rejection.

Montgomery et al does not expressly disclose printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has been read by the post office. However, Montgomery does disclose that the status of the mailpiece is update by the central computer, and the status can be checked on a webpage (Fig 27). Therefore, at the minimum the status webpage can be printed to indicate that the identification code has been read by the post office. It would have been obvious at the time of the invention for Montgomery et al to substitute printing the webpage at anywhere a printer is available with printing the webpage at the postage meter. Since printing a webpage and printing at a postage meter are well known in the arts, the simple substitution of one known element for another producing a predictable result renders the claim obvious.

Montgomery discloses the following in paragraph 0175.

[0175] A refund inquiry can also be in the form of an audit review of all postage transactions in a user account. FIG. 27 illustrates exemplary results of an audit review. The account administrator can review the list of postage transactions for duplicate postage transactions. Once a duplicate postage transaction is suspected, the account administrator can click "Get Status" to determine if the mail piece associated with either of the duplicate postage transactions has been delivered. A refund inquiry can also be in the form of a refund pattern audit. FIG. 28 illustrates exemplary results of a refund pattern audit performed on the customers of a particular postage vendor. As can be seen, the account administrator can determine the refund percentage (by piece and total postage amount) of each customer.

Montgomery discloses an audit or refund procedural that is used once duplicate postage transaction is suspected. An Account Administration can click "Get Status" to determine if the mail piece associated with either the duplicate postage transaction has duplicate postage transaction has been delivered.

Montgomery does not disclose or anticipate steps e and g of claim 1 as amended and those claims dependent thereon, namely (e) retrieving the identification code from the data center and the identification code read by the

post office and (g) printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has been read by the post office to provide proof of mailing the mail piece having the identification code.

Applicant's printed postage meter certificate may be used to provide proof of mailing the mail piece having the identification code. The certificate then may be used as legal proof that the mail piece was processed by the post. This is important in many instances where the mailer must prove that a mail piece was sent to recipient i.e. insurance notices, contractual provisions, other legal notices etc.

Currently the mailer has to go to the post to obtain a physical certificate that the post processed the mail piece. In applicants claimed invention the physical certificate may be obtained by the mailer without going to the post. The post is not open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Thus, mailers would be able to obtain proof of mailing every hour of the day and seven days a week.

B. Claim 21 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC § 103 (a) over Montgomery in view of Ng U.S. Patent 5,174,398.

Claim 21depends on claim 1. In claim 21 the mailer selected service level for the mail piece is registered mail.

In addition to the arguments made in above please consider the following.

The Examiner stated the following in pages 9 and 10 of the Final Rejection.

Montgomery et al disclose a plurality of type of service levels that a user can select for a mail piece. [0080] Montgomery et al does not expressly disclose that registered mail is a service level that can be selected.

Ng discloses many mail service levels can be selected, such as registered mail. (col. 1: lines 15-18).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made for Montgomery et al to include registered mail as a service level that a user can select for a mail piece since the claimed invention is merely combination of old elements, and in the combination each

element merely would have performed the same function as it did separately, and one ordinary skill in the art would have recognized that the results of the combination were predictable.

Montgomery discloses the following in paragraph 0080.

[0080] Like the prior art envelope 102 shown in FIG. 1, the label 200 shown in FIG. 2 carries a self-validating unique postage indicium 204 that is presented in a two-dimensional barcode 206 containing data relating to the mail piece on which the label 200 is applied, as well as human-readable information 208, return address 212, destination address 214, and POSTNET barcode 216. Noteworthy, is that Facing Identification Marks (FIM) are not located on the label 200, since the FIM is only a requirement for letter mail and has no value in the processing of packages. The label 200 further includes a standard unique tracking ID 218 at its center. The tracking ID 218 is presented in an associated computer readable form (such as, e.g., a one-dimensional barcode 220), and as alpha-numerical data 222, in this case, the number "0180 5213 9070 2211 5878." Up to this point, a typical USPS label, which can be used to provide tracking capability for mere administrative purposes, has been described. For example, in the USPS environs, one can obtain a delivery confirmation code for Priority Mail, an Express Mail tracking code for Express Mail, a Signature Confirmation code for Priority Mail, and a delivery confirmation code for media mail. Similar tracking ID's are used by other carriers (such as, e.g., UPS, and FedEx), as well as other postal authorities worldwide. Tracking numbers may also be added to First Class mail in the future, and are used in such ancillary services at Certified Mail.

Ng discloses the following in col. 1, lines 9-26.

Postage scales and meters are commonplace in mail rooms everywhere. Such postage systems have become ever more sophisticated in their ability to provide a large variety of services to a user. For example, many postage systems today weigh an article, provide a user with a selection of postage options (such as first class, express mail, and the like). The user selects the desired mail service from the various options. The user then selects from optional services (registered mail and the like) and enters the destination of the item via a zip or zone code. From the above information the postage scale indicates the postage amount needed and/or issues postage for the required amount. U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,484,307 (Quatse et al.), 4,644,142 (Payn), and 4,742,469 (Haines) (all assigned to the assignee of the present invention)

disclose postage systems with representative features and are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

Ng discloses using a postage scale and a postage meter for determining the cost of mailing a mailpiece by registered mail.

Montgomery and/or Ng taken separating or together do not disclose or anticipate obtaining from a postage meter a certificate indicating the mailer selected a service level for the mail piece to be registered mail that has been read by the Post Office.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Examiner is also required to explain how and why one having ordinary skill in the art would have been led to modify an applied reference and/or combine applied references to arrive at the claimed invention. *In re Ochiai*, 37 USPQ2d 1127 (Fed. Cir. 1995); *In re Deuel*, 51 F.3d 1552, 34 USPQ 1210 (Fed. Cir. 1995); *In re Fritch*, 972 F.2d 1260, 23 USPQ 1780 (Fed. Cir. 1992); *Uniroyal, Inc. v. Rudkin-Wiley Corp.*, 837 F.2d 1044, 5 USPQ2d 1434 (Fed. Cir. 1988). *See KSR Int'l Co. v. Teleflex Inc.*, 550 U.S. ___ , 127 S.Ct. 1727, 1735 (2007) ("[R]ejections on obviousness grounds cannot be sustained by mere conclusory statements; instead, there must be some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness." *Id.* (quoting Kahn, 441 F.3d at 988)). *See also, Takeda Chem. Indus., Ltd. v. Alphapharm Pty., Ltd.*, 492 F.3d 1350, 1357 (Fed. Cir. 2007) (To avoid improper use of hindsight, the Examiner must articulate "a reason that would have prompted a person of ordinary skill in the relevant field to combine the elements in the way the claimed new invention does" in an obviousness determination. (quoting *KSR*, 127 S. Ct. at 1731)).

See also, In re Kahn, 441 F.3d 977 (Fed. Cir. 2006)(Most inventions arise from a combination of old elements and each element may often be found in the prior art. However, mere identification in the prior art of each element is insufficient to defeat the patentability of the combined subject matter as a whole).

In conclusion, Appellant respectfully submits that the final rejection of claims 1-3, 5-19, and 21 is in error for at least the reasons given above and should, therefore, be reversed.

Respectfully submitted,

/Ronald Reichman/
Ronald Reichman
Reg. No. 26,796
Attorney of Record
Telephone (203) 924-3854

PITNEY BOWES INC.
Intellectual Property and
Technology Law Department
35 Waterview Drive
P.O. Box 3000
Shelton, CT 06484-8000

VIII.   CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. A method for providing proof of mailing one or more mail pieces by a mailer, the method comprises the steps of:

    (a) placing an identification code on individual mail pieces with a postage meter at a location other than a post office, wherein the identification code identifies the recipient of the mail piece and uniquely identifies individual mail pieces;

    (b) transmitting the identification code to a data center;

    (c) depositing one or more mail pieces with the post office at the post office or at a location other than the post office;

    (d) attempting reading by the post office at a location other than the post office or at the post office the identification code that is on one or more mail pieces;

    (e) retrieving the identification code from the data center and the identification code read by the post office;

    (f) notifying the postage meter that individual identification codes have been received by the data center and individual mail pieces identification codes have been read or not read by the post office; and

    (g) printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has been read by the post office to provide proof of mailing the mail piece having the identification code.

2. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the postage meter is an electronic postage meter.

3. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the postage meter is a computer postage meter with a secure storage device.

5. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:

    printing on the certificate the date the mail piece was read.

6. The method claimed in claim 5, further including the step of:

     printing on the certificate the time the mail piece was read.

7. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:

     printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has not been read by the post office after a certain period of time has elapsed after the data center has received the identification code from the meter.

8. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the identification code is a unique number.

9. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises:

     the serial number of the postage meter, and the date and time that the identification code was affixed to the mail piece.

10. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the steps of:

     (a) printing a postal indicia on the mail piece for the payment of postage and any related postal fees; and

     (b) charging the postage meter for printing the postal indicia.

11. The method claimed in claim 10, further including the step of:

     refunding the postage meter account for part or all of the postage and fees that have been placed on mail pieces having identification codes that have not been read by the post office after a certain period of time has elapsed after the data center has received the identification code from the meter.

12. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:

     notifying the mailer via telephone that individual identification codes have been received by the data center and individual mail pieces' identification codes have been read or not read by the post office.

13. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:

notifying the mailer via e-mail that individual identification codes have been received by the data center, and individual mail pieces' identification codes have been read or not read by the post office.

14. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:

notifying the mailer via facsimile that individual identification codes have been received by the data center, and individual mail pieces' identification codes have been read or not read by the post office.

15. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the steps of:
identifying the mailer's reference number of the document contained in the mail piece.

16. The method claimed in claim 15, further including:

(a) printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has not been read by the post office after a certain period of time has elapsed after the data center has received the identification code from the meter; and

(b) printing the mailer's reference number on the certificate of induction.

17. The method claimed in claim 16, further including the step of:
printing the mailer's name on the certificate of induction.

18. The method claimed in claim 15, further including the step of:

(a) printing at the postage meter a certificate indicating that the identification code has been read by the post office; and

(b) printing the mailer's reference number on the certificate of induction.

19. The method claimed in claim 18, further including the step of:

printing the mailer's name on the certificate of induction.

20. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the mailer selected a service level for the mail piece to be certified mail.

21. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the mailer selected a service level for the mail piece to be registered mail.

IX.   <u>EVIDENCE APPENDIX</u>

There is no additional evidence to submit.

X. RELATED PROCEEDING APPENDIX

There are no related Appeals and Interferences.